



2018 CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

VOLUNTEER MONITORING LAB ANALYSIS SUPPORT PROGRAM

BACKGROUND

The Montana Department of Environmental Quality's (DEQ) Water Quality Monitoring and Assessment Program provides support to entities that enlist volunteers to collect data for water quality monitoring projects related to nonpoint source pollution.

SCOPE

DEQ seeks applications for up to \$3,000 from Volunteer Monitoring Programs seeking financial assistance with laboratory sample analysis costs associated with water quality monitoring projects related to nonpoint source pollution. Eligible applicants include non-profit local watershed groups, conservation districts, water quality districts, school systems, county extension services, and county governments. Applicants are required to develop and follow a Sampling and Analysis Plan (SAP) to guide their efforts and a draft SAP is required to be submitted with the application. DEQ will review and provide comment on draft SAPs and funding will be competitively awarded to selected groups upon DEQ's acceptance of a final SAP. This program is for laboratory analyses and sample shipping costs, and does **not** provide funding for any operational costs such as SAP development, travel, monitoring time, or purchasing/maintaining field equipment. The maximum amount of funding per group for lab analyses and shipping costs is \$3,000. Energy Laboratories, Inc. is the service provider for lab analyses under this Call for Applications and all billing will be coordinated by DEQ with the lab. Upon SAP approval, groups shall contact Energy Laboratories with bottle order requests and the lab will ship coolers and sample supplies to the group. Groups will ship or hand-deliver samples to Energy Laboratories' facilities in Billings or Helena. Analytical results will be sent directly from the lab to the group. All data that is collected using these funds must be uploaded by the group to DEQ's water quality (eWQX) database. Groups are required to submit a final report at the completion of their project.

The Application, SAP Template, and SAP Supplemental Guidance Document can be downloaded from DEQ's website:

<http://deq.mt.gov/Water/WPB/Nonpoint-Source-Program/Volunteer-Monitoring>

ELIGIBILITY

What is a Volunteer Monitoring Program?

To be considered a volunteer monitoring program, a program must incorporate volunteers that collect data. The term volunteer monitoring should not be used to describe efforts where paid professionals of an organization contribute in-kind donations of their organization's resources to conduct monitoring while being paid their salary. A volunteer monitoring program must meet the following guidelines to be eligible:

- Incorporate at least one person monitoring in a volunteer capacity (unpaid time); more than one volunteer is highly preferred,
- Has some level of internal project oversight for administrative and reporting purposes,
- Has a primary, paid or volunteer, contact that oversees the technical aspects of the program; a paid professional may be used for project organization, training, quality assurance review, and to meet project completeness goals.

Eligibility Checklist:

In order for an application to eligible, the following requirements must be met:

- Applicant must be a Volunteer Monitoring Program as defined by DEQ (see section titled: What is a Volunteer Monitoring Program?)
- Applicant is a non-profit watershed group, conservation district, water quality district, school system, county extension service, or county government located in Montana
- Project is located in Montana
- Applicant provided a Tax ID number for their fiscal sponsor organization
- Application was received or postmarked by 2:00 PM on March 23, 2018
- Application is complete and includes a draft SAP and budget
- Sampling project and final reporting will be completed by February 28, 2019

SCHEDULE

Event	Date
Applications due to DEQ	March 23, 2018 by 2:00 PM
DEQ comments on draft SAP sent to applicants and funding is allocated	April 6, 2018
Final SAPs due to DEQ	Before first sampling event
Final Report due to DEQ	Once sampling has been completed or by February 28, 2019

Applications are due March 23, 2018 at 2:00 pm and must include a draft SAP and budget.

DEQ staff will review SAPs and provide feedback to applicants by April 6, 2018. Awardees will be given instructions for submitting samples to the lab once comments are sufficiently addressed and DEQ has accepted the Awardee's SAP. Funding decisions will be made by April 6, 2018. If all funds are not allocated, applications will be received and funded on a case by case basis.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Successful applicants must meet all Terms and Conditions described in this Call for Applications in order to remain eligible for continued support through this program.

Funds awarded under this Call for Applications expire February 28, 2019.

Groups must have a DEQ-approved SAP prior to submitting samples to Energy Laboratories. SAP Template and SAP Supplemental Guidance Document can be downloaded from DEQ's Nonpoint Source Program's website located here:

<http://deq.mt.gov/Water/WPB/Nonpoint-Source-Program/Volunteer-Monitoring>

Quality Assurance and quality control (QA/QC) activities, including sample collection procedures and laboratory analyses, must be followed as described in the final approved SAP. Guidance is available at <http://deq.mt.gov/Water/WQPB/qaprogram/sops>.

All data collected using these funds must be uploaded to DEQ's eWQX database by the group. Instructions are located here: <http://deq.mt.gov/Water/WQINFO/datamgmt/mtewqx>.

Recipients are required to submit a brief final report summarizing:

- Activities performed
- Important findings and outcomes of the project activities
- Feedback from participants
- An evaluation of how well the monitoring goals and objectives were met
- Photos of activities

APPLICATION CRITERIA

The decision to award funds to a VM project will be based on the following criteria, as addressed in the application form:

- 1. The application identifies a narrowly focused project goal.** (Application question 2)
- 2. The application identifies a specific question(s) about water quality that the monitoring will be used to address.** (Application question 3)
- 3. The proposed monitoring parameters and timing of sample collection focus on the identified monitoring question(s).** (Application question 3)
- 4. The applicant has identified how the laboratory results will be analyzed in order to address the study questions.** (Application question 3)
- 5. Results of the project will be shared with the appropriate audiences.** (Application question 4)
- 6. Results of the project will be used to make positive improvements in water quality.** (Application question 5)
- 7. This project fits into larger watershed scale planning.** (Application question 6)

- 8. The group has taken the appropriate steps to facilitate monitoring this year.** (Application question 7)
- 9. The applicant has the appropriate experience and/or technical assistance for the type of project for which funding is requested.** (Application question 8)

For more information about the Volunteer Monitoring Lab Analysis Support Program, please contact:

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